

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A rigidizing mechanism comprising:

an inner element and an outer element positioned concentrically around the inner element, wherein the inner and outer elements are flexible; and
a plurality of components positioned between the inner and outer elements, each component being distinct from the inner and outer elements;

wherein in a first state the components interfere between the inner and outer elements with a force sufficient to prevent the inner and outer elements from sliding ~~lengthwise~~ longitudinally relative to one another, and in a second state the components do not significantly interfere with the inner and outer elements sliding ~~lengthwise~~ longitudinally relative to one another.

27. (Previously presented) The mechanism of claim 26:

wherein the components comprise an electroactive polymer.

28. (Previously presented) The mechanism of claim 26:

wherein the components comprise balloons.

29. (Previously presented) The mechanism of claim 26:

wherein the components are energized and expanded radially in the first state.

30. (Previously presented) The mechanism of claim 26:

wherein the components are energized and contracted radially in the second state.

31. - 55. (Canceled)